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Message Text

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46
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 SAB-01 OMB-01 AID-05 CU-02

ACDA-05 SY-05 A-01 OPR-02 SCS-03 SCA-01 OC-05 CCO-00

SSM-03 SCCT-01 /108 W
---------- 012580
R 151105Z MAR 76
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7791
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, PINS, IS, JO
SUBJECT: FURTHER JEWISH ATTEMPTS TO PRAY ON TEMPLE MOUNT;
WEST BANK UNREST PERSISTS

REF: JERUSALEM 346

1. SUMMARY. ISRAELI AUTHORITIES ARE CONTINUING TO TURN BACK JEWISH ATTEMPTS TO PRAY ON TEMPL MOUNT (HARAM-ESH-SHARIF) IN JERUSALEM. DEMONSTRATIONS CONTINUE IN WEST BANK TOWNS, HOWEVER, AND CITY COUNCILS THAT HAVE RESIGNED HAVE REJECTED MILGOVT DEMAND THAT THEY WITHDRAW RESIGNATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. ISLAMIC COUNCIL SOURCE HAS CONFIRMED RADIO REPORT THAT ABOUT 40 BETAR (HERUT YOUTH GROUP) MEMBERS TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY
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MARCH 14 TO PRAY ON TEMPLE MOUNT. POLICE TURNED THEM BACK

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AT TWO SEPARATE ENTRANCES TO HARAM AREA, HE SAID, ADDING THAT ATTEMPT BY SMALLER GROUPS BEING MADE DAILY, SO FAR WITHOUT SUCCESS. HE CLAIMED NO KNOWLEDGE OF REPORT THAT FOUR OR FIVE JEWISH YOUTH REACHED COURTYARD OUTSIDE AL AQSA MOSQUE AND WERE "BEATEN UP" BY MOSLEM GUARDS.

3. MEANWHILE CITY COUNCILS OF NABLUS, RAMALLAH, EL-BIREH, BIR ZEIT AND SILWAS (SMALL TOWN NORTHEAST OF RAMALLAH AND BIR ZEIT WHERE COUNCIL RESIGNED MARCH 11 IN SYMPATHY WITH OTHERS) HAVE CONFIRMED INTENTION TO STICK BY THEIR STAND AND REJECT MILGOVT DEMAND THAT THEY WITHDRAW RESIGNATIONS. ISRAELI AUTHORITIES REPORTEDLY WILL NOT APPOINT INTERIM ADMINISTRATORS IF MUNICIPALITIES CONTINUE TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SERVICES EVEN IN ABSENCE OF MAYOR AND COUNCIL.

4. RAMALLAH RESIDENT INFORMED US MARCH 15 THAT ANOTHER DEMONSTRATION UNDERWAY THERE THIS MORNING, WITH PARTICIPATION OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL STUDENTS ALONG WITH HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS. TIRES REPORTEDLY BEING BURNED IN STREETS. ARABIC PRESS REPORTS STONE-THROWING DEMONSTRATION THERE ALSO MARCH 14. SECURITY FORCES HAVE BEEN STRENGTHENED THERE AND IN OTHER MAJOR TOWNS WHERE PROTEST EFFORTS CONTINUE. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SAID TO BE "IRREGULAR" THROUGHOUT WEST BANK DURING PAST FEW DAYS.

5. JERUSALEM POST REPORTS THAT FILM CREW WORKING ON MOVIE "ABRAHAM" IN HEBRON HILLS WEST OF ETZION BLOC WAS STONED BY LOCAL RESIDENTS MARCH 14 AND HAD TO BE RESCUED BY IDF. TWO PHOTOGRAPHERS REPORTEDLY SLIGHTLY HURT AND 35 ARAB VILLAGERS DETAINED.

6. COMMENT. THERE ARE REPORTS THAT SOME OF RESIGNED CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS MAY ALSO REFUSE TO RUN IN APRIL 12 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, CREATING SITUATION IN WHICH THERE WOULD BE INSUFFICIENT CANDIDATES TO FILL COUNCIL SEATS. WE ARE SOMEWHAT DOUBTFUL, SINCE THIS WOULD PRESUMABLY RESULT IN DIRECT ISRAELI ADMINISTRATION OF TOWNS THROUGH MILGOVT APPOINTEES, SOMETHING MOST WEST BANKERS WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT. MOREOVER, PRO-PLO ARABIC DAILY AL FAJR IS CONTINUING TO URGE PARTICIPATION IN ELECTIONS, VERY LIKELY HOPING THAT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WILL STRENGTHEN SUPPORT FOR PRO-PLO CANDIDATES.
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NNN

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